

**BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
GOLF SUBCOMMITTEE**

There was a regular meeting of the above-referenced subcommittee held on Wednesday, January 30, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in Conference Room #5, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Committee members present were: Councilor Rivers, Jon Colman, Brad Klein

Non-Committee members present were: Ciaran Carr, Mark Mansur, Ryan Phelps, Matt Fauerback

Absent was: Councilors Jacobs and Banks, Bill Starkie, Jerry Long

Guest: Roy Duncan, 18 Barn Hill Road and Duane Adams, 11 Julie Lane

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. There was no quorum present.

Approval of Minutes

There was no quorum to approve the minutes.

Citizens Comments

1. **Roy Duncan, 18 Barn Hill Road**, expressed his opinion regarding a policy with no trespassing signage. He stated that residents are disgruntled about not being able to walk the golf course during off-peak season times. He also reiterated that the State of Connecticut has laws protecting municipalities against liability issues. Mr. Duncan would like the policy to be changed, get rid of the current signs and make the course open to the public for walking.
2. **Duane Adams, 11 Julie Lane**, stated that during the initial plans to build the golf course, residents were ensured that the public could walk. He also mentioned issues with drainage by the driving range area and the brook located in the neighborhood of Julie Lane and Barn Hill Rd. can potential overflow into residential backyards. Mr. Adams inquired about well water relative to fertilizer monitoring.

Councilor Rivers stated that the Town has taken a position to designate the golf course as a specific use versus open public land. Attorney Marc Needelman wrote an opinion to reflect this policy.

Mr. Jon Colman gave a brief background history regarding initial policies of the golf course. He stated some concerns within the 1st year of operation, the Town clarified and distinguished off season activities versus on season to the public. In addition, Mr. Colman inquired about the Management's position relative to potential damage to the facility and being able to monitor off season activities.

Mr. Brad Klein stated that within the initial plans of building the course, a walking path was suggested; however there were some permitting issues.

Mr. Mark Mansur addressed the concerns about well water, pesticides and water quality test are done regularly. All fertilizers are carefully monitored with no adverse effect on well and ground water.

Mr. Ciaran Carr stated that it has been increasingly difficult to monitor people on the course. If there is a town ordinance it will be enforced.

Mr. Duncan suggested that signage should be posted on course etiquette instead of trespassing, comparable to Rockledge Golf Course in West Hartford, CT.

After a lengthy discussion regarding the public trespassing concerns, the committee decided that the signage language should be less invasive. Management will make recommendation of changes and present at the next scheduled meeting, Monday, February 25, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

Status of Property

Mr. Ciaran Carr presented the committee with an update regarding the year end financials and overall progress at Wintonbury Hills Golf Course. The number of rounds have increased by 9.86%, however revenues missed budget by \$132,000. Pass holders sales have decreased over \$60,000, with the loss impact contributable to special pass sales from Gillette Ridge. Mr. Carr also stated that outing sales continue to increase, 6.6% over prior year.

Mr. Colman suggested value advertising and interlocking pass holders to play other courses.

Mr. Klein stated that most individuals are wise to play free open tee times, without increasing the rates. Unfortunately, the benefit of losing pass holders could reflect a favorable market opportunity to generate a higher revenue rate per round.

Mr. Ryan Phelps presented and reviewed the 2013/2014 budget with committee members. Management decided to lower rounds slightly in this year's budget in order to generate a higher APR. The total revenue will be higher than FY 2010 financials and a 4% increase over 2012 actuals. Mr. Phelps also stated that 2010 financials will be used as a benchmark, which is the last time the market was favorable. It was noted that 2012 was a good year, but nothing spectacular occurred.

The Cost of Goods sales and Labor will remain flat and is consistent from year to year.

The allocation for Food & Beverage will increase due to the Meals to Go program.

There is more of an impact this year than in the past with the increase of taxes and benefits across the board of the company.

Operational expenses will be flat across the board. The General & Administrative expenses have been normalized to the three year average. Although, in 2012 the company missed revenue, they made budget on the expenditure side.

Leases and equipment remain flat and will not be increasing, with no new items listed for 2013.

Overall, the budgetary goal is to have a net profit of \$103,000 for the year, which sets course in preparation for moderate weather and incidental emergencies. This budget is in line with the goals of the town.

Mr. Colman recommended to Councilor Rivers to e-mail the 2013 Golf Course budget to committee members for comments.

Mr. Phelps discussed the plan to do fewer rounds with slightly more money. Management has taken a dynamic pricing model where certain tee times can be moved up or down. The committee could always debate about how many rounds the course should generate, how much to charge and how aggressive to be within budget line items?

Mr. Colman mentioned that management has consistently demonstrated the ability to develop a responsible budget. The annual goal is to hold the line on expenses and maximize revenue, while the course continues to return funds to the town.

Course Operations

Maintenance Update

Mr. Mark Mansur, Superintendent stated that the golf course received a snow plow and truck from the town for winter cleanup.

Mr. Klein inquired about the difference in maintenance after the bunker restoration project. Mr. Mansur stated that staff is able to focus on other areas of the course as well as maintaining detailed work on reconditioned bunkers.

Status of Food and Beverage Service

The current Meals 2 Go Program has been a success thus far with new menus, online viewing and ordering. The program began in January, 2013.

Report of Usage/Revenue/Expenditures

In reviewing the year-end figures for 2012, budgeted revenue was missed by \$132,000 as a result of loss from the Gillette Ridge discounting program for memberships. Management noted good financial data for the year-end review.

Labor and expenses remain consistent to budget in almost every department. The course has also maintained a positive cash flow of \$237,000. Other operational expenses are favorable 13.6% to budget, \$104,911 as a result of the new agreement with the town. The Cost of Goods sale remains in line with the budget as well.

Marketing

Management launched the 2012 Pass holder Campaign, which will remain consistent with the same pricing as 2011. There may be further discussion to add a summer offer for 3 months.

The Meals to Go Program brochure was distributed within a 1.5 mile radius of the club and emailed to the same demographics.

The SNAG Juniors Program is scheduled to expand in with spring visits to grade and middle school students. The goal is to introduce a middle school golf team with onsite instruction. Management would also like to establish and implement an Adopt-a-Junior with pass holders.

Other Business

In regards to snow removal, Mr. Carr will communicate with Mr. John Lawlor, Director of Public Works regarding golf course needs during the winter months. Management continues to work diligently on obtaining reduced rates for gas and diesel.

Adjournment

It was moved by Councilor Jacobs, seconded by Councilor Banks and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m.